



CITY OF FALLS CHURCH

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Falls Church City Council Approves FY 2008 Budget With No Property Tax Rate Increase

Supports Vision and Strategic Plan; invests in schools, affordable housing, and the environment

FALLS CHURCH, VA. – The Falls Church City Council approved the Fiscal Year 2008 Operating Budget and Capital Improvements Program at their April 23 regular meeting, with no increases in the real estate and personal property tax rates. FY08 runs from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008.

The \$70,790,648 FY 2008 budget maintains the City's financial security and high-quality services. The budget portrays modest increases with a 3.0 percent increase in City government operating expenses over FY 2007 and a 5.2 percent increase in the transfer to schools over FY 2007.

The real estate property tax rate will remain at \$1.01 per \$100 of assessed value. In a time of flattening property assessments, the City Council has avoided raising Falls Church City's real estate property tax rate while preserving high quality services. Taxes on the average home in Falls Church City will remain stable. Commercial revenues generated in part by the City's economic development initiatives have helped ensure the City can continue to support quality services without increases in real estate or personal property taxes.

The budget was developed to meet community needs based on the Council's adopted Vision and Strategic Plan. Highlights include:

No increase in the real estate tax rate -- The Council approved a tax rate of \$1.01 per \$100 of assessed value, which maintains the rate adopted in the FY07 budget.

Public Schools fully funded -- The Council continued its strong commitment to the Falls Church City Public Schools, which are ranked among the best in the nation. The Council fully funded the School Operating Fund at \$35,391,002, demonstrating their commitment to providing academic excellence and the recruitment and retention of preeminent teachers.

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Affordable housing investments funded -- The Council allocated \$2 million to affordable housing, which equates to just over half a penny on the real estate tax rate for the duration of the bonds. Projections indicate that \$2 million could leverage approximately \$35 million in private investment with state and federal incentives toward an affordable housing development or series of projects.

Zoning Code rewrite funded -- The budget provides \$120,000 in new funding for a comprehensive rewrite of City Zoning Codes to facilitate community preservation and economic development.

Five new personnel positions funded -- The budget reduces payroll costs for upper management and redirects those funds to create five new positions that provide direct program support and customer service, including a Building Inspections Electrical Inspector, Environmental Services Civil Engineer, Recreation and Parks Maintenance Worker, Recreation and Parks Program Supervisor, and a Public Safety Parking Enforcement Officer.

Employee training and benchmarks funded -- The budget invests in a high performing workforce by allocating \$100,000 for employee training and the development of performance benchmarks for all functions relating to water and sewer services.

Rectangular field funding restored -- Responding to community needs and Open Space Task Force recommendations, the Council restored \$475,000 for rectangular fields, which was previously removed from the Capital Improvements Program approved for FY07.

Hazardous waste collection event funded -- Funding of \$19,491 is provided for an annual household hazardous waste collection event as proposed in the City's Solid Waste Management Plan. The initiative will more effectively divert hazardous waste from entering the normal waste stream and provides a useful service to City residents who otherwise would dispose of hazardous waste at the Fairfax County disposal site.

Green Fleet Program funding renewed -- The budget continues funding the City's Green Fleet Program to replace new vehicles with hybrids.

Water and Sewer Funds balanced -- The Water and Sewer Funds are balanced within estimated revenues with no rate change. The water rate will remain at \$3.03 per thousand gallons in FY 2008 and the sewer rate will remain at \$5.91 per thousand gallons. The budget includes capital expenditures of \$950,311 for the City's share of upgrades to the Arlington and Fairfax county wastewater treatment plants, as well as maintenance of existing infrastructure.

Copies of the final budget and capital improvements program will be available at www.fallschurchva.gov in the coming weeks.

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